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# ABRAHAM LINCOLN:

## A PAPER

READ BEFORE THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY,  
LONDON, JUNE 16TH, 1881.

BY  
HON. ISAAC N. <sup>45</sup>ARNOLD, F.R.H.S.

# STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS:

## AN EULOGY

DELIVERED BEFORE THE CHICAGO UNIVERSITY,  
JULY 3D, 1861.

BY  
HON. JAMES W. SHEAHAN.

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# ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By HON. ISAAC N. ARNOLD. •

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A Paper read before the Royal Historical Society, London, June 16, 1881.

THE noblest inheritance we, Americans, derive from our British ancestors is the memory and example of the great and good men who adorn your history. They are as much appreciated and honored on our side of the Atlantic as on this. In giving to the English-speaking world Washington and Lincoln we think we repay, in large part, our obligation. Their preëminence in American history is recognized, and the republic, which the one *founded* and the other *preserved*, has, already, crowned them as models for her children.

In the annals of almost every great nation some names appear standing out clear and prominent, names of those who have influenced, or controlled, the great events which make up history. Such were Wallace and Bruce, in Scotland, Alfred and the Edwards, William the Conqueror, Cromwell, Pitt, Nelson, and Wellington, in England, and such in a still greater degree were Washington and Lincoln.

I am here, from near his home, with the hope that I may, to some extent, aid you in forming a just and true estimate of Abraham Lincoln. I knew him, somewhat intimately, in private and public life for more than twenty years. We practised law at the same bar, and, during his administration, I was a member of Congress, seeing him and conferring with him often, and, therefore, I may hope without vanity, I trust that I shall be able to contribute something of value in enabling you to judge of him. We in America, as well as you in the old world, believe that "blood will tell;" that it is a great blessing to have had an honorable and worthy ancestry. We

believe that moral principle, physical and intellectual vigor in the forefathers are qualities likely to be manifested in the descendants. Fools are not the fathers or mothers of great men. I claim for Lincoln, humble as was the station to which he was born, and rude and rough as were his early surroundings, that he had such ancestors. I mean that his father and mother, his grandfather and grandmother, and still further back, however humble and rugged their condition, were physically and mentally strong, vigorous men and women; hardy and successful pioneers on the frontier of American civilization. They were among the early settlers in Virginia, Kentucky, and Illinois, and knew how to take care of themselves in the midst of difficulties and perils; how to live and succeed when the weak would perish. These ancestors of Lincoln, for several generations, kept on the very crest of the wave of Western settlements—on the frontier, where the struggle for life was hard and the strong alone survived.

His grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, and his father, Thomas, were born in Rockingham County, Virginia.

About 1781, while his father was still a lad, his grandfather's family emigrated to Kentucky, and was a contemporary with Daniel Boone, the celebrated Indian fighter and early hero of that State. This, a then wild and wooded territory, was the scene of those fierce and desperate conflicts between the settlers and the Indians which gave it the name of "The dark and bloody ground."

When Thomas Lincoln, the father of the President, was six years old, his father (Abraham, the grandfather of the President) was shot and instantly killed by an Indian. The boy and his father were at work in the corn-field, near their log-cabin home. Mordecai, the elder brother of the lad, at work not far away, witnessed the attack. He saw his father fall, and ran to the cabin, seized his ready-loaded rifle and springing to the loop-hole cut through the logs, he saw the Indian, who had seized the boy, carrying him away. Raising his rifle and aiming at a silver medal, conspicuous on the breast of the Indian, he instantly fired. The Indian fell, and the lad, springing to his feet, ran to the open arms of his mother, at the

cabin door. Amidst such scenes, the Lincoln family naturally produced rude, rough, hardy, and fearless men, familiar with wood-craft; men who could meet the extremes of exposure and fatigue, who knew how to find food and shelter in the forest; men of great powers of endurance—brave and self-reliant, true and faithful to their friends and dangerous to their enemies. Men with minds to conceive and hands to execute bold enterprises.

It is a curious fact that the grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, is noted on the surveys of Daniel Boone as having purchased, of the Government, five hundred acres of land. Thomas Lincoln, the father, was also the purchaser of government land, and President Lincoln left, as a part of his estate, a quarter-section (one hundred and sixty acres), which he had received from the United States, for services rendered in early life as a volunteer soldier, in the Black-Hawk Indian war. Thus for three generations the Lincoln family were land-owners directly from the Government.

Such was the lineage and family from which President Lincoln sprang. Such was the environment in which his character was developed.

He was born in a log-cabin, in Kentucky, on the 12th of February, 1809.

It will aid you in picturing to yourself this young man and his surroundings, to know that, from boyhood to the age of twenty-one, in winter his head was protected from the cold by a cap made of the skin of the coon, fox, or prairie-wolf, and that he often wore the buckskin breeches and hunting-shirt of the pioneer.

He grew up to be a man of majestic stature and Herculean strength. Had he appeared in England or Normandy, some centuries ago, he would have been the founder of some great Baronial family, possibly of a Royal dynasty. He could have wielded, with ease, the two-handed sword of Guy, the great Earl of Warwick, or the battle-axe of Richard of the Lion-heart.

#### HIS EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

The world is naturally interested in knowing what was the education and training which fitted Lincoln for the

great work which he accomplished. On the extreme frontier, the means of book-learning was very limited. The common free schools, which now closely follow the heels of the pioneer and organized civil government, and prevail all over the United States, had not then reached the Far-West. An itinerant school-teacher wandered occasionally into a settlement, opened a private school for a few months, and, at such, Lincoln attended at different times in all about twelve months. His mother, who was a woman of practical good sense, of strong physical organization, of deep religious feeling, gentle and self-reliant, taught him to read and write.

Although she died when he was only nine years old, she had already laid deep the foundations of his excellence. Perfect truthfulness and integrity, love of justice, self-control, reverence for God, these constituted the solid basis of his character. These were all implanted and carefully cultivated by his mother, and he always spoke of her with the deepest respect and the most tender affection. "All that I am, or hope to be," said he, when President, "I owe to my sainted mother."

He early manifested the most eager desire to learn, but there were no libraries, and few books in the back settlements in which he lived. Among the stray volumes, which he found in the possession of the illiterate families by which he was surrounded, were *Æsop's Fables*, *Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress*, a life of Washington, the poems of Burns, and the Bible. To these his reading was confined, and he read them over and over again, until they became as familiar almost as the alphabet. His memory was marvellous, and I never yet met the man more familiar with the Bible than Abraham Lincoln. This was apparent in after-life, both from his conversation and writings, scarcely a speech or state paper of his in which illustrations and allusions from the Bible can not be found.

While a young man, he made for himself, of coarse paper, a scrap-book, into which he copied everything which particularly pleased him. He found an old English grammar, which he studied by himself; and he formed, from his constant study of the Bible, that simple, plain, clear Anglo-Saxon style, so effective with the people. He



illustrated the maxim that it is better to know thoroughly a few good books than to skim over many. When fifteen years old, he began (with a view of improving himself) to write on various subjects and to practise in making political and other speeches. These he made so amusing and attractive that his father had to forbid his making them in working-hours, for, said he, "when Abe begins to speak, all the hands flock to hear him." His memory was so retentive that he could repeat, *verbatim*, the sermons and political speeches which he heard.

While his days were spent in hard manual labor, and his evenings in study, he grew up strong in body, healthful in mind, with no bad habits; no stain of intemperance, profanity, or vice of any kind. He used neither tobacco nor intoxicating drinks, and, thus living, he grew to be six feet four inches high, and a giant in strength. In all athletic sports he had no equal. I have heard an old comrade say, "he could strike the hardest blow with the woodman's axe, and the maul of the rail-splitter, jump higher, run faster than any of his fellows, and there were none, far or near, who could lay him on his back." Kind and cordial, he early developed so much wit and humor, such a capacity for narrative and story-telling, that he was everywhere a most welcome guest.

#### A LAND SURVEYOR.

Like Washington, he became, in early life, a good practical surveyor, and I have, in my library, the identical book from which, at eighteen years of age, he studied the art of surveying. By his skill and accuracy, and by the neatness of his work, he was sought after by the settlers, to survey and fix the boundaries of their farms, and in this way, in part, he earned a support while he studied law. In 1837, self-taught, he was admitted and licensed, by the Supreme Court of Illinois, to practise law.

#### A LAWYER.

It is difficult for me to describe, and, perhaps, more difficult for you to conceive the contrast when Lincoln began to practise law, between the forms of the administration of justice in Westminster Hall, and in the rude

log court-houses of Illinois. I recall to-day what was said a few years ago by an Illinois friend, when we visited, for the first time, Westminster Abbey, and as we passed into Westminster Hall. "This," he exclaimed, "this is the grandest forum in the world. Here Fox, Burke, and Sheridan hurled their denunciations against Warren Hastings. Here Brougham defended Queen Caroline. And this," he went on to repeat, in the words of Macauley, (words as familiar in America as here), "This is the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which has resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings, and which has witnessed the trials of Bacon and Somers and Strafford and Charles the First." "And yet," I replied, "I have seen justice administered on the prairies of Illinois without pomp or ceremony, everything simple to rudeness, and yet, when Lincoln and Douglas led at that bar, I have seen justice administered by judges as pure, aided by advocates as eloquent, if not as learned, as any who ever presided, or plead, in Westminster Hall."

The common-law of England (said to be the perfection of human wisdom) was administered in both forums, and the decisions of each tribunal were cited as authority in the other; both illustrating that reverence for, and obedience to, law, which is the glory of the English-speaking race.

Lincoln was a great lawyer. He sought to convince rather by the application of principle than by the citation of authorities. On the whole, he was stronger with the jury than with the court. I do not know that there has ever been, in America, a greater or more successful advocate before a jury, on the right side, than Abraham Lincoln. He had a marvellous power of conciliating and impressing everyone in his favor. A stranger entering the court, ignorant of the case, and listening a few moments to Lincoln, would find himself involuntarily on his side and wishing him success. He was a quick and accurate reader of character, and seemed to comprehend, almost intuitively, the peculiarities of those with whom he came in contact. His manner was so candid, his methods so direct, so fair, he seemed so anxious that truth and justice should prevail, that everyone wished him success.

He excelled in the statement of his case. However complicated, he would disentangle it, and present the important and turning-point in a way so clear that all could understand. Indeed, his statement often alone won his cause, rendering argument unnecessary. The judges would often stop him by saying, "If that is the case, brother Lincoln, we will hear the other side."

His ability in examining a witness, in bringing out clearly the important facts, was only surpassed by his skilful cross-examinations. He could often compel a witness to tell the truth, where he meant to lie. He could make a jury laugh, and generally weep, at his pleasure. On the right side, and when fraud or injustice were to be exposed, or innocence vindicated, he rose to the highest range of eloquence, and was irresistible. But he must have faith in his cause to bring out his full strength. His wit and humor, his quaint and homely illustrations, his inexhaustible stores of anecdote, always to the point, added greatly to his power as a jury-advocate.

He never misstated evidence or misrepresented his opponent's case, but met it fairly and squarely.

He remained in active practice until his nomination, in May, 1860, for the presidency. He was employed in the leading cases in both the federal and state courts, and had a large clientelage, not only in Illinois, but was frequently called, on special retainers, to other States.

#### AN ILLINOIS POLITICIAN.

By his eloquence and popularity he became, early in life, the leader of the old Whig party, in Illinois. He served as member of the State Legislature, was the candidate of his party for speaker, presidential elector, and United States senator, and was a member of the lower house of Congress.

#### SLAVERY.

When the independence of the American republic was established, African slavery was tolerated as a local and temporary institution. It was in conflict with the moral sense, the religious convictions of the people, and the political principles on which the government was founded.

But having been tolerated, it soon became an organized,

aggressive power, and, later, it became the master of the government. Conscious of its inherent weakness, it demanded and obtained additional territory for its expansion. First, the great Louisiana territory was purchased, then Florida, and then Texas.

By the repeal, in 1854, of the prohibition of slavery north of the line of 36°, 30' of latitude (known in America as the "Missouri Compromise"), the slavery question became the leading one in American politics, and the absorbing and exciting topic of discussion. It shattered into fragments the old conservative Whig party, with which Mr. Lincoln had, theretofore, acted. It divided the Democratic party, and new parties were organized upon issues growing directly out of the question of slavery.

The leader of that portion of the Democratic party which continued, for a time, to act with the slavery party, was Stephen Arnold Douglas, then representing Illinois in the United States Senate. He was a bold, ambitious, able man, and had, thus far, been uniformly successful. He had introduced and carried through Congress, against the most vehement opposition, the repeal of the law, prohibiting slavery, called the Missouri Compromise.

#### THE CONTEST BETWEEN FREEDOM AND SLAVERY IN THE TERRITORIES.

The issue having been now distinctly made between freedom and the extension of slavery into the territories, Lincoln and Douglas, the leaders of the Free-soil and Democratic parties, became more than ever antagonized. The conflict between freedom and slavery now became earnest, fierce, and violent, beyond all previous political controversies, and from this time on, Lincoln plead the cause of liberty with an energy, ability, and eloquence, which rapidly gained for him a national reputation. From this time on, through the tremendous struggle, it was he who grasped the helm and led his party to victory. Conscious of a great cause, inspired by a generous love of liberty, and animated by the moral sublimity of his great theme, he proclaimed his determination, ever thereafter, "to speak for freedom, and against slavery, until everywhere the sun shall shine, the rain shall fall, and the wind

blow upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil."

#### THE LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS DEBATE.

The great debate between Lincoln and Douglas, in 1858, was, unquestionably, both with reference to the ability of the speakers and its influence upon opinion and events, the most important in American history. I do not think I do injustice to others, nor over-estimate their importance, when I say that the speeches of Lincoln published, circulated, and read, throughout the Free-States, did more than any other agency in creating the public opinion, which prepared the way for the overthrow of slavery. The speeches of John Quincy Adams, and those of Senator Sumner, were more learned and scholarly, and those of Lovejoy and Wendel Philips were more vehement and impassioned; Senators Seward, Chase, and Hale spoke from a more conspicuous forum, but Lincoln's speeches were as philosophic, as able, as earnest as any, and his manner had a simplicity and directness, a clearness of illustration, and his language a plainness, a vigor, an Anglo-Saxon strength, better adapted, than any other, to reach and influence the understanding and sentiment of the common people.

At the time of this memorable discussion, both Lincoln and Douglas were in the full maturity of their powers. Douglas being forty-five and Lincoln forty-nine years old. Douglas had had a long training and experience as a popular speaker. On the hustings (stump, as we say in America) and in Congress, and especially in the United States Senate, he had been accustomed to meet the ablest debaters of his State and of the Nation.

His friends insisted that never, either in conflict with a single opponent, or when repelling the assaults of a whole party, had he been discomfited. His manner was bold, vigorous, and aggressive. He was ready, fertile in resources, familiar with political history, strong and severe in denunciation, and he handled, with skill, all the weapons of the dialectician. His iron will, tireless energy, united with physical and moral courage, and great personal magnetism, made him a natural leader, and gave him personal popularity.

Lincoln was also now a thoroughly trained speaker. He had contended successfully at the bar, in the legislature, and before the people, with the ablest men of the West, including Douglas, with whom he always rather sought than avoided a discussion. But he was a courteous and generous opponent, as is illustrated by the following beautiful allusion to his rival, made in 1856, in one of their joint debates. "Twenty years ago, Judge Douglas and I first became acquainted; we were both young then; he a trifle younger than I. Even then, we were both ambitious, I, perhaps, quite as much as he. With me, the race of ambition has been a flat failure. With him, it has been a splendid success. His name fills the Nation, and it is not unknown in foreign lands. I affect no contempt for the high eminence he has reached; so reached, that the oppressed of my species might have shared with me in the elevation, I would rather stand on that eminence than wear the richest crown that ever pressed a monarch's brow."

We know, and the world knows, that Lincoln did reach that high, nay, far higher eminence, and that he did reach it in such a way that the "oppressed" did share with him in the elevation.

Such were the champions who, in 1858, were to discuss, before the voters of Illinois, and with the whole Nation as spectators, the political questions then pending, and especially the vital questions relating to slavery. It was not a single combat, but extended through a whole campaign.

On the return of Douglas, from Washington, to Illinois, in July, 1858, Lincoln and Douglas being candidates for the senate, the former challenged his rival to a series of joint debates, to be held at the principal towns in the State. The challenge was accepted, and it was agreed that each discussion should occupy three hours, that the speakers should alternate in the opening and the close—the opening speech to occupy one hour, the reply one hour and a-half, and the close half an hour. The meetings were held in the open air, for no hall could hold the vast crowds which attended.

In addition to the immense mass of hearers, reporters, from all the principal newspapers in the country, attended,

so that the morning after each debate, the speeches were published, and eagerly read by a large part, perhaps a majority of all the voters of the United States.

The attention of the American people was thus arrested, and they watched with intense interest, and devoured every argument of the champions.

Each of these great men, I doubt not, at that time, sincerely believed he was right. Douglas' ardor, while in such a conflict, would make him think, for the time being, he was right, and I *know* that Lincoln argued for freedom against the extension of slavery with the most profound conviction that on the result hung the fate of his country. Lincoln had two advantages over Douglas; he had the best side of the question, and the best temper. He was always good-humored, always had an apt story for illustration, while Douglas sometimes, when hard pressed, was irritable.

Douglas carried away the most popular applause, but Lincoln made the deeper and more lasting impression. Douglas did not disdain an immediate *ad captandum* triumph, while Lincoln aimed at permanent conviction. Sometimes, when Lincoln's friends urged him to raise a storm of applause (which he could always do by his happy illustrations and amusing stories), he refused, saying the occasion was too serious, the issue too grave. "I do not seek applause," said he, "nor to amuse the people, I want to convince them."

It was often observed, during this canvass, that while Douglas was sometimes greeted with the loudest cheers, when Lincoln closed, the people seemed solemn and serious, and could be heard, all through the crowd, gravely and anxiously discussing the topics on which he had been speaking.

Douglas secured the immediate object of the struggle, but the manly bearing, the vigorous logic, the honesty and sincerity, the great intellectual powers, exhibited by Mr. Lincoln, prepared the way, and, two years later, secured his nomination and election to the presidency. It is a touching incident, illustrating the patriotism of both these statesmen, that, widely as they differed, and keen as had been their rivalry, just as soon as the life of the Republic

was menaced, by treason, they joined hands, to shield and save the county they loved.

The echo and the prophecy of this great debate was heard, and inspired hope in the far-off cotton and rice-fields of the South. The toiling blacks, to use the words of Whittier, began hopefully to pray:

"We pray de Lord. He gib us signs  
Dat some day we be free.  
De Norf wind tell it to de pines,  
De wild duck to de sea.

"We tink it when de church-bell ring,  
We dream it in de dream,  
De rice-bird mean it when he sing,  
De eagle when he scream."

#### THE COOPER-INSTITUTE SPEECH.

In February, 1860, Mr. Lincoln was called to address the people of New York, and, speaking to a vast audience, at the Cooper Institute (the Exeter Hall of the United States), the poet Bryant presiding, he made, perhaps, the most learned, logical, and exhaustive speech to be found in American anti-slavery literature. The question was, the power of the National Government to exclude slavery from the territories. The orator from the prairies, the morning after this speech, awoke to find himself famous.

He closed with these words, "Let us have faith that *right* makes *might*, and in that faith let us, to the end, do our duty as we understand it."

This address was the carefully finished product of, not an orator and statesman only, but also of an accurate student of American history. It confirmed and elevated the reputation he had already acquired in the Douglas debates, and caused his nomination and election to the presidency.

If time permitted, I would like to follow Mr. Lincoln, step by step, to enumerate his measures one after another, until, by prudence and courage, and matchless statesmanship, he led the loyal people of the republic to the final and complete overthrow of slavery and the restoration of the Union.

From the time he left his humble home, in Illinois, to assume the responsibilities of power, the political horizon



black with treason and rebellion, the terrific thunder clouds,—the tempest which had been gathering and growing more black and threatening for years, now ready to explode,—on and on, through long years of bloody war, down to his final triumph and death—what a drama! His eventful life terminated by his tragic death, has it not the dramatic unities, and the awful ending, of the Old Greek tragedy?

#### HIS FAREWELL TO HIS NEIGHBORS.

I know of nothing, in history, more pathetic than the scene when he bade good-bye to his old friends and neighbors. Conscious of the difficulties and dangers before him, difficulties which seemed almost insurmountable, with a sadness as though a presentiment that he should return no more was pressing upon him, but with a deep religious trust which was characteristic, on the platform of the rail-carriage, which was to bear him away to the Capital, he paused and said, "No one can realize the sadness I feel at this parting. Here I have lived more than a quarter of a century. Here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded but for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which, at all times, he relied.. \* \* \* I hope you, my dear friends, will all pray that I may receive that Divine assistance, without which I can not succeed, but with which, success is certain."

And as he waved his hand in farewell to the old home, to which he was never to return, he heard the response from many old friends, "God bless and keep you." "God protect you from all traitors." His neighbors "sorrowing most of all," for the fear "that they should see his face no more."

#### HIS INAUGURAL AND APPEAL FOR PEACE.

In his inaugural address, spoken in the open air, and from the eastern portico of the capitol, and heard by thrice ten thousand people, on the very verge of civil war,

he made a most earnest appeal for peace. He gave the most solemn assurance, that "the property, peace, and security of no portion of the Republic should be endangered by his administration." But he declared, with firmness, that the union of the States must be "perpetual," and that he should "execute the laws faithfully in every state." "In doing this," said he, "there need be no bloodshed nor violence, nor shall there be, unless forced upon the National Authority." In regard to the difficulties which thus divided the people, he appealed to all to abstain from precipitate action, assuring them that intelligence, patriotism, and a firm reliance on Him, who has never yet forsaken the Republic, "were competent to adjust, in the best way, all existing troubles."

His closing appeal, against civil war, was most touching, "In your hands," said he, and his voice, for the first time faltered, "In your hands, and not in mine, are the momentous issues of civil war." \* \* "You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors." \* \* "I am," continued he, "loth to close, we are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies, though passion may strain,—it must not break the bonds of affection."

The answer to these appeals was the attack upon Fort Sumpter, and immediately broke loose all the maddening passions which riot in blood and carnage and civil war.

I know not how I can better picture and illustrate the condition of affairs, and of public feeling, at that time, than by narrating two or three incidents.

#### DOUGLAS' PROPHECY, JANUARY 1, 1861.

In January, 1861, Senator Douglas, then lately a candidate for the presidency, with Mrs. Douglas, one of the most beautiful and fascinating women in America, a relative of Mrs. Madison, occupied, at Washington, one of the most magnificent blocks of dwellings, called the "Minnesota Block." On New-Year's-day, 1861, General Charles Stewart, of New York, from whose lips I write an account of the incident, says,

"I was making a New-Year's-call on Senator Douglas; after some conversation, I asked him,

"What will be the result, Senator, of the efforts of Jefferson Davis, and his associates, to divide the Union?' We were," said Stewart, "sitting on the sofa together, when I asked the question. Douglas rose, walked rapidly up and down the room for a moment, and then pausing, he exclaimed, with deep feeling and excitement:

"The Cotton States are making an effort to draw in the Border States, to their schemes of Secession, and I am but too fearful they will succeed. If they do, there will be the most fearful civil war the world has ever seen, lasting for years.'

"Pausing a moment, he looked like one inspired, while he proceeded: 'Virginia, over yonder, across the Potomac,' pointing toward Arlington, 'will become a charnel-house—but in the end the Union will triumph. They will try,' he continued, 'to get possession of this Capital, to give them *prestige* abroad, but in that effort they will never succeed; the North will rise *en masse* to defend it. But Washington will become a city of hospitals, the churches will be used for the sick and wounded. This house,' he continued, 'the *Minnesota Block* will be devoted to that purpose before the end of the war.'

"Every word he said was literally fulfilled—all the churches nearly were used for the wounded, and the Minnesota Block, and the very room in which this declaration was made, became the 'Douglas Hospital.'

"What justification for all this?' said Stewart.

"There is no justification,' replied Douglas.

"I will go as far as the constitution will permit to maintain their just rights. But,' said he, rising upon his feet and raising his arm, 'if the Southern States attempt to secede, I am in favor of their having just so many slaves, and just so much slave territory, as they can hold at the point of the bayonet, and no more.'"

#### WILL THE NORTH FIGHT?

Many Southern leaders believed there would be no serious war, and labored industriously to impress this idea on the Southern people.

Benjamin F. Butler, who, as a delegate from Massachusetts, to the Charlestown Convention, had voted many

times for Breckenridge, the extreme Southern candidate for president, came to Washington, in the winter of 1860-1, to inquire of his old associates what they meant by their threats.

"We mean," replied they, "we mean Separation—a Southern Confederacy. We will have our independence, a Southern government—with no discordant elements."

"Are you prepared for war?" said Butler, coolly.

"Oh, there will be no war; the North won't fight."

"The North *will* fight," said Butler, "the North will send the *last man* and expend the *last dollar* to maintain the Government."

"But," replied Butler's Southern friends, "the North can't fight—we have too many allies there."

"You have friends," responded Butler, "in the North, who will stand by you so long as you fight your battles in the Union, but the moment you fire on the flag, the North will be a unit against you." "And," Butler continued, "you may be assured if war comes, *slavery ends*."

#### THE SPECIAL SESSION OF CONGRESS, JULY, 1861.

On the brink of this civil war, the President summoned Congress to meet on the 4th of July, 1861, the anniversary of our Independence. Seven States had already seceded, were in open revolt, and the chairs of their representatives, in both houses of Congress, were vacant. It needed but a glance at these so numerous vacant seats to realize the extent of the defection, the gravity of the situation, and the magnitude of the impending struggle. The old pro-slavery leaders were absent. Some in the rebel government, set up at Richmond, and others marshalling troops in the field. Hostile armies were gathering, and from the dome of the Capitol, across the Potomac, and on toward Fairfax, in Virginia, could be seen the Confederate flag.

Breckenridge, late the Southern candidate for president, now Senator from Kentucky, and soon to lead a rebel army, still lingered in the Senate. Like Cataline among the Roman Senators, he was regarded with aversion and distrust. Gloomy and, perhaps, sorrowful, he said, "I can

only look with sadness on the melancholy drama that is being enacted."

Pardon the digression, while I relate an incident which occurred in the Senate, at this special session.

Senator Baker, of Oregon, was making a brilliant and impassioned reply to a speech of Breckenridge, in which he denounced the Kentucky senator, for giving aid and encouragement to the enemy, by his speeches. At length he paused, and, turning toward Breckenridge, and fixing his eye upon him, he asked, "What would have been thought if, after the battle of Cannæ, a Roman senator had risen, amidst the conscript Fathers, and denounced the war, and opposed all measures for its success."

Baker paused, and every eye in the Senate, and in the crowded galleries was fixed upon the almost solitary senator from Kentucky. Fessenden broke the painful silence, by exclaiming, in low deep tones, which gave expression to the thrill of indignation, which ran through the hall, "He would have been hurled from the Tarpeian Rock."

Congress manifested its sense of the gravity of the situation by authorizing a loan of two hundred and fifty millions of dollars, and empowering the President to call into the field five hundred thousand men, and as many more as he might deem necessary.

#### SURRENDER OF MASON AND SLIDELL.

No act of the British Government, since the "stamp act" of the Revolution, has ever excited such intense feeling of hostility toward Great Britain, as her haughty demand for the surrender of Mason and Slidell. It required *nerve*, in the President, to stem the storm of popular feeling, and yield to that demand, and it was, for a time, the most unpopular act of his administration. But when the excitement of the day had passed, it was approved by the sober judgment of the Nation.

Prince Albert is kindly and gratefully remembered in America, where it is believed that his action, in modifying the terms of that demand, probably saved the United States and Great Britain from the horrors of war.

## LINCOLN AND THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

When in June, 1858, at his home, in Springfield, Mr. Lincoln startled the people with the declaration, "This government can not endure, permanently, half slave and half free," and when, at the close of his speech, to those who were laboring for the ultimate extinction of slavery, he exclaimed, with the voice of a prophet, "We shall not fail, if we stand firm, we shall *not* fail. Wise councils may accelerate, or mistakes delay, but sooner or later the victory is sure to come;" he anticipated success, through years of discussion, and final triumph through peaceful and constitutional means by the ballot. He did not foresee, nor even dream (unless in those dim mysterious shadows, which sometimes startle by half revealing the future), his own elevation to the presidency. He did not then suspect that he had been appointed by God, and should be chosen by the people, to proclaim the emancipation of a race, and to save his country. He did not foresee that slavery was so soon to be destroyed, amidst the flames of war which itself kindled.

## HIS MODERATION.

He entered upon his administration with the single purpose of maintaining national unity, and many reproached and denounced him for the slowness of his anti-slavery measures. The first of the series was the abolition of slavery at the National Capitol. This act gave freedom to three thousand slaves, with compensation to their loyal masters. Contemporaneous with this was an act conferring freedom upon all colored soldiers who should serve in the Union armies and upon their families. The next was an act, which I had the honor to introduce, prohibiting slavery in all the territories, and wherever the National Government had jurisdiction. But the great, the decisive act of his administration, was the "Emancipation Proclamation."

## EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.

The President had urged, with the utmost earnestness, on the loyal slave-holders, of the Border States, gradual

and compensated emancipation, but in vain. He clearly saw, all saw, that the slaves, as used by the confederates, were a vast power, contributing immensely to their ability to carry on the war, and, that by declaring their freedom, he would convert millions of freedmen into active friends and allies of the Union. The people knew that he was deliberating upon the question of issuing this Emancipation Proclamation. At this crisis, the Union men of the Border States made an appeal to him to withhold the edict, and suffer slavery to survive.

They selected John J. Crittenden, a venerable and eloquent man, and their ablest statesman, to make, on the floor of Congress, a public appeal to the President, to withhold the proclamation. Mr. Crittenden had been governor of Kentucky, her senator in Congress, attorney-general of the United States, and now, in his old age, covered with honors, he accepted, like John Quincy Adams, a seat in Congress, that in this crisis he might help to save his country.

He was a sincere Union man, but believed it unwise to disturb slavery. In his speech, he made a most eloquent and touching appeal, from a Kentuckian to a Kentuckian. He said, among other things, "There is a niche, near to that of Washington, to him who shall save his country. If Mr. Lincoln will step into that niche, the *founder* and the *preserver* of the Republic shall stand side by side."

\* \* Owen Lovejoy, the brother of Elijah P. Lovejoy, who had been mobbed and murdered, because he would not surrender the liberty of the press, replied to Crittenden. After his brother's murder, kneeling upon the green sod which covered that brother's grave, he had taken a solemn vow, of eternal war upon slavery. Ever after, like Peter the Hermit, with a heart of fire and a tongue of lightning, he had gone forth, preaching his crusade against slavery. At length, in his reply, turning to Crittenden, he said, "The gentleman, from Kentucky, says he has a niche for Abraham Lincoln, where is it?"

Crittenden pointed toward Heaven.

Lovejoy continuing said, "He points upward, but, sir! if the President follows the counsel of that gentleman, and becomes the perpetuator of slavery, he should point

*downward*, to some dungeon in the temple of Moloch, who feeds on human blood, and where are forged chains for human limbs; in the recesses of whose temple woman is scourged and man tortured, and outside the walls are lying dogs, gorged with human flesh, as Byron describes them, lying around the walls of Stamboul." "That," said Lovejoy, "is a suitable place for the statue of him who would perpetuate slavery."

"I, too," said he, "have a temple for Abraham Lincoln, but it is in freedom's holy fane, \* \* \* not surrounded by slave fetters and chains, but with the symbols of freedom—not dark with bondage, but radiant with the light of liberty. In that niche he shall stand proudly, nobly, gloriously, with broken chains and slave's whips beneath his feet. \* \* \* That is a fame worth living for, aye, more, it is a fame worth dying for, though that death led through Gethsemane and the agony of the accursed tree." \* \* \*

"It is said," continued he, "that Wilberforce went up to the judgment seat with the broken chains of eight hundred thousand slaves! Let Lincoln make himself the Liberator, and his name shall be enrolled, not only in this earthly temple, but it shall be traced on the living stones of that temple which is reared amid the thrones of Heaven."

Lovejoy's prophecy has been fulfilled—in this world—you see the statues to Lincoln, with broken chains at his feet, rising all over the world, and—in that other world—few will doubt that the prophecy has been realized.

In September, 1862, after the Confederates, by their defeat at the great battle of Antietam, had been driven back from Maryland and Pennsylvania, Lincoln issued the Proclamation. It is a fact, illustrating his character, and showing that there was in him what many would call a tinge of superstition, that he declared, to Secretary Chase, that he had made a solemn vow to God, saying, "if General Lee is driven back from Pennsylvania, I will crown the result with the declaration of FREEDOM TO THE SLAVE." The final Proclamation was issued on the first of January, 1863. In obedience to an American custom, he had been receiving calls on that New-Year's-day, and,



for hours, shaking hands. As the paper was brought to him by the Secretary of State, to be signed, he said, "Mr. Seward, I have been shaking hands all day, and my right hand is almost paralyzed. If my name ever gets into history, it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it. If my hand trembles when I sign the proclamation, those who examine the document hereafter, will say, "he hesitated."

Then, resting his arm a moment, he turned to the table, took up the pen, and slowly and firmly wrote *Abraham Lincoln*. He smiled as, handing the paper to Mr. Seward, he said, "that will do."

From this day, to its final triumph, the tide of victory seemed to set more and more in favor of the Union cause. The capture of Vicksburg, the victory of Gettysburg, Chattanooga, Chicamauga, Lookout-Mountain, Missionary Ridge, Sheridan's brilliant campaign in the Valley of the Shenandoah; Thomas' decisive victory at Nashville; Sherman's march, through the Confederacy, to the sea; the capture of Fort McAllister; the *sinking of the Alabama*; the taking of Mobile, by Farragut; the occupation of Columbus, Charlestown, Savannah; the evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond; the surrender of Lee to Grant; the taking of Jefferson Davis a prisoner; the triumph everywhere of the National Arms; such were the events which followed (though with delays and bloodshed) the "Proclamation of Emancipation."

#### THE AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION.

Meanwhile Lincoln had been triumphantly reelected, Congress had, as before stated, abolished slavery at the Capital, prohibited it in all the territories, declared all negro soldiers in the Union armies, and their families free, and had repealed all laws which sanctioned or recognized slavery, and the President had crowned and consummated all, by the proclamation of emancipation. One thing alone remained to perfect, confirm, and make everlastingly permanent these measures, and this was to embody in the Constitution itself, the prohibition of slavery everywhere within the Republic.

To change the organic law, required the adoption by a

two-thirds' vote of a joint resolution, by Congress, and that this should be submitted to, and ratified by two-thirds of the States.

The President, in his annual message and in personal interviews with members of Congress, urged the passage of such resolution. To test the strength of the measure, in the House of Representatives, I had the honor, in February, 1864, to introduce the following resolution:

*"Resolved*, That the Constitution should be so amended as to abolish slavery in the United States wherever it now exists, and to prohibit its existence in every part thereof forever" (Cong. Globe, vol. 50, p. 659). This was adopted, by a decided vote, and was the first resolution ever passed by Congress in favor of the entire abolition of slavery. But, although it received a majority, it did not receive a majority of two-thirds.

The debates on the Constitutional Amendment (perhaps the greatest in our Congressional history, certainly the most important since the adoption of the Constitution) ran through two sessions of Congress. Charles Sumner, the learned senator from Massachusetts, brought to the discussion, in the Senate, his ample stores of historical illustration, quoting largely in its favor from the historians, poets, and statesmen of the past.

The resolution was adopted in the Senate by the large vote of ayes, 38, noes, 6.

In the lower House, at the first session, it failed to obtain a two-thirds' vote, and, on a motion to reconsider, went over to the next session.

Mr. Lincoln again earnestly urged its adoption, and, in a letter to Illinois friends, he said, "The signs look better. \* \* \* Peace does not look so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon, and come to stay, and so come as to be worth keeping in all future time."

I recall, very vividly, my New-Year's-call upon the President, January, 1864. I said:

"I hope, Mr. President, one year from to-day I may have the pleasure of congratulating you on the occurrence of three events which now seem probable."

"What are they?" inquired he.

"1. That the rebellion may be entirely crushed.

"2. That the Constitutional Amendment, abolishing and prohibiting slavery, may have been adopted.

"3. And that Abraham Lincoln may have been re-elected President."

"I think," replied he, with a smile, "I would be glad to accept the first two as a compromise."

General Grant, in a letter, remarkable for that clear good-sense and practical judgment for which he is distinguished, condensed into a single sentence the political argument in favor of the Constitutional Amendment, "The North and South," said he, "can *never* live at peace with each other except as *one nation and that without slavery.*"

#### GARFIELD'S SPEECH.

I would be glad to quote from this great debate, but must confine myself to a brief extract from the speech of the present President, then a member of the House. He began by saying, "Mr. Speaker, we shall never know why slavery dies so hard in this Republic, and in this Hall, until we know why sin outlives disaster and Satan is immortal." \* \* "How well do I remember," he continued, "the history of that distinguished predecessor of mine, *Foshua R. Giddings*, lately gone to his rest, who, with his forlorn hope of faithful men, took his life in his hands and, in the name of justice, protested against the great crime, and who stood bravely in his place until his white locks, like the plume of Henry of Navarre, marked where the battle of freedom raged fiercest." \* \* "In its mad arrogance, slavery lifted its hand against the Union, and since that fatal day it has been a fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth."

Up to the last roll-call, on the question of the passage of the resolution, we were uncertain and anxious about the result. We needed Democratic votes. We knew we should get some, but whether enough to carry the measure none could surely tell.

As the clerk called the names of members, so perfect was the silence that the sound of a hundred pencils keeping tally could be heard through the Hall.

Finally, when the call was completed, and the speaker announced that the resolution was adopted, the result was

received by an uncontrollable burst of enthusiasm. Members and spectators (especially the galleries, which were crowded with convalescent soldiers) shouted and cheered, and, before the speaker could obtain quiet, the roar of artillery on Capitol Hill proclaimed to the City of Washington, the passage of the resolution. Congress adjourned, and we hastened to the White House to congratulate the President on the event.

He made one of his happiest speeches. In his own peculiar words, he said, "*The great job is finished.*" "I can not but congratulate," said he, "all present, myself, the country, and the whole world on this great moral victory."

#### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

And now, with an attempt to sketch very briefly some of his peculiar personal characteristics, I must close.

This great Hercules of a man had a heart as kind and tender as a woman. Sterner men thought it a weakness. It saddened him to see others suffer, and he shrunk from inflicting pain. Let me illustrate his kindness and tenderness by one or two incidents. One summer's day, walking along the shaded path leading from the Executive-mansion to the War-office, I saw the tall awkward form of the President seated on the grass under a tree. A wounded soldier, seeking back-pay and a pension, had met the President, and, having recognized him, asked his counsel. Lincoln sat down, examined the papers of the soldier, and told him what to do, sent him to the proper Bureau with a note, which secured prompt attention.

After the terribly destructive battles between Grant and Lee, in the Wilderness of Virginia, after days of dreadful slaughter, the lines of ambulances, conveying the wounded from the steamers on the Potomac to the great field hospitals on the heights around Washington, would be continuous,—one unbroken line from the wharf to the hospital. At such a time, I have seen the President, in his carriage, driving slowly along the line, and he looked like one who had lost the dearest members of his own family. On one such occasion, meeting me, he stopped and said, "I can not bear this; this suffering, this loss of life—is dreadful."

I recalled to him a line from a letter he had years before written to a friend, whose great sorrow he had sought to console. Reminding him of the incident, I asked him, "Do you remember writing to your suffering friend these words:

*"And this too shall pass away,  
Never fear. Victory will come."*

In all his State papers and speeches during these years of strife and passion, there can be found no words of bitterness, no denunciation. When others railed, he railed not again. He was always dignified, magnanimous, patient, considerate, manly, and true. His duty was ever performed "with malice toward none, with charity for all," and with "firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."

#### NEVER A DEMAGOGUE.

Lincoln was never a demagogue. He respected and loved the people, but never flattered them. No man ever heard him allude to his humble life and manual labor, in a way to obtain votes. None knew better than he, that splitting rails did not qualify a man for public duties. He realized painfully the defects of his education, and labored diligently and successfully to supply his deficiencies.

#### HIS CONVERSATION.

He had no equal as a talker in social life. His conversation was fascinating and attractive. He was full of wit, humor, and anecdote, and, at the same time, original, suggestive, and instructive. There was in his character a singular mingling of mirthfulness and melancholy. While his sense of the ludicrous was keen, and his fun and mirth were exuberant, and sometimes almost irrepressible; his conversation sparkling with jest, story, and anecdote and in droll description, he would pass suddenly to another mood, and become sad and pathetic—a melancholy expression of his homely face would show that he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

## HIS STORIES.

The newspapers, in America, have always been full of Lincoln's stories and anecdotes, some true and many fabulous.

He always had a story ready, and, if not, he could improvise one, just fitted for the occasion. The following may, I think, be said to have been *adapted*:

An Atlantic port, in one of the British provinces, was, during the war, a great resort and refuge for blockade-runners, and a large contraband trade was said to have been carried on from that port with the Confederates. Late in the summer of 1864, while the election of president was pending, Lincoln being a candidate, the Governor-General of that province, with some of the principal officers, visited Washington, and called to pay their respects to the executive. Mr. Lincoln had been very much annoyed by the failure of these officials to enforce, very strictly, the rules of neutrality, but he treated his guests with great courtesy. After a pleasant interview, the Governor, alluding to the approaching presidential election, said, jokingly, but with a grain of sarcasm, "I understand, Mr. President, everybody votes in this country. If we remain until November can we vote?"

"You remind me," replied the President, "of a countryman of yours, a green emigrant from Ireland. Pat arrived in New York on election day, and was, perhaps, as eager as Your Excellency, to vote, and to vote early and late and often. So, upon his landing at Castle Garden, he hastened to the nearest voting place, and, as he approached, the judge, who received the ballots, inquired, 'who do you want to vote for? on which side are you?' Poor Pat was embarrassed, he did not know who were the candidates. He stopped, scratched his head, then, with the readiness of his countrymen, he said:

"'I am fornent the Government, anyhow. Tell me, if your Honor plases, which is the rebellion side, and I'll tell you how I want to vote. In Ould Ireland, I was always on the rebellion side, and, by Saint Patrick, I'll stick to that same in America.'

"Your Excellency," said Mr. Lincoln, "would, I should think, not be at all at a loss on which side to vote?"

## THE BOOKS HE READ.

The two books he read most were the Bible and Shakespeare. With them he was familiar, reading and quoting from them constantly. Next to Shakespeare, among the poets, was Burns, with whom he had a hearty sympathy, and upon whose poetry he wrote a lecture. He was extremely fond of ballads, and of simple, sad, and plaintive music.

I called one day at the White House, to introduce two officers of the Union army, both Swedes. Immediately he began and repeated from memory, to the delight of his visitors, a long ballad, descriptive of Norwegian scenery, a Norse legend, and the adventures of an old Viking among the fiords of the North.

He said he had read the poem in a newspaper, and the visit of these Swedes recalled it to his memory.

On the last Sunday of his life, as he was sailing up the Potomac, returning to Washington from his visit to Richmond, he read aloud many extracts from Macbeth, and, among others, the following, and with a tone and accent so impressive that, after his death, it was vividly recalled by those who heard him:

"Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well;  
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further!"

After his assassination, those friends could not fail to recall this passage from the same play.

"This Duncan  
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued against  
The deep damnation of his taking-off."

## HIS RELIGION.

It is strange that any reader of Lincoln's speeches and writings, should have had the hardihood to charge him with infidelity, but the charge, having been repeatedly made, I reply, in the light of facts accessible to all, that no more reverent christian (not excepting Washington)

ever filled the chair of President. Declarations of his trust in God, his faith in the efficacy of prayer, pervade his speeches and writings. From the time he left Springfield, to his death, he not only himself continuedly prayed for Divine assistance, but never failed to ask the prayers of others for himself and his country.

His reply to the negroes of Baltimore, who, in 1864, presented him with a beautiful Bible, as an expression of their love and gratitude, ought to have silenced all who have made such charges. After thanking them, he said, "This great book is the best gift God has given to man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated through this book."

When a member of Congress, knowing his religious character, asked him "why he did not join some church?" Mr. Lincoln replied, "Because I found difficulty, without mental reservation, in giving my assent to their long and complicated confessions of faith. When any church will inscribe over its altar the Saviour's condensed statement of law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart."

#### WHAT HE ACCOMPLISHED.

Let us try to sum up in part what he accomplished.

When he assumed the duties of the executive, he found an empty treasury, the National credit gone, the little nucleus of an army and navy scattered and disarmed, the officers, who had not deserted to the rebels, strangers; the party which elected him in a minority (he having been elected only because his opponents were divided between Douglas, Breckenridge, and Everett), the old Democratic party, which had ruled most of the time for half a century, hostile, and even that part of it in the North, from long association, in sympathy with the insurgents; his own party made up of discordant elements, and neither he nor his party had acquired prestage and the confidence of the people. It is the exact truth to say that when he entered the *White House* he was the object of personal prejudice to a majority of the American people, and of contempt to a



powerful minority. He entered upon his task of restoring the integrity of a broken Union, without sympathy from any of the great powers of Western Europe. Those which were not hostile, manifested a cold neutrality, exhibiting toward him and his government no cordial good-will, nor extending any moral aid. Yet, in spite of all, he crushed the most stupendous rebellion, supported by armies more vast, by resources greater, and an organization more perfect, than ever before undertook the dismemberment of a nation. He united and held together, against contending factions, his own party, and strengthened it by securing the confidence and winning the support of the best part of all parties. He composed the quarrels of rival generals; and, at length, won the respect, and confidence, and sympathy of all nations and peoples. He was reelected, almost by acclamation, and, after a series of brilliant victories, he annihilated all armed opposition. He led the people, step by step, to emancipation, and saw his work crowned by an amendment of the Constitution, eradicating and prohibiting slavery forever, throughout the Republic.

Such is a brief and imperfect summary of his achievements during the last five years of his life. And this good man, when the hour of victory came, made it not the hour of vengeance, but of forgiveness and reconciliation.

These five years of incessant labor and fearful responsibility told even upon his strength and vigor. He left Illinois, for the Capital, with a frame of iron and nerves of steel. His old friends who had known him as a man who did not know what illness was; who had seen him on the prairies before the Illinois courts, full of life, genial, and sparkling with fun; now saw the wrinkles on his forehead deepened into furrows—the laugh of the old days lost its heartiness; anxiety, responsibility, care, and hard work wore upon him, and his nerves of steel, at times, became irritable. He had had no respite, had taken no holidays. When others fled away, from the dust and heat of the Capital, he stayed. He would not leave the helm until all danger was past, and the good ship of state had made her port.

I will not dwell upon the unutterable sorrow, of the

American people, at his shocking death. But I desire to express here, in this great City of this grand Empire, the sensibility with which the people of the United States received, at his death, the sympathy of the English-speaking race.

That sympathy was most eloquently expressed by all. It came from Windsor Castle to the White House; from England's widowed Queen to the stricken and distracted widow at Washington. From Parliament to Congress, from the people of all this magnificent Empire, as it stretches round the world, from England to India, from Canada to Australia, came words of deep feeling, and they were received by the American people, in their sore bereavement, as the expression of a kindred race.

I can not forbear referring in particular to the words spoken in Parliament on that occasion, by Lords Russell and Derby, and, especially, by that great and picturesque leader, so lately passed away, Lord Beaconsfield. After a discriminating eulogy upon the late President, and the expression of profound sympathy, he said:

"Nor is it possible for the people of England, at such a moment, to forget that he sprang from the same fatherland and spake the same mother-tongue."

God grant that, in all the unknown future, nothing may ever disturb the friendly feeling and respect which each nation entertains for the other. May there never be another quarrel in the family.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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EDWARDSVILLE, ILL., *Sept. 6, 1881.*

HON. I. N. ARNOLD,

*Dear Sir:*—I thank you for that copy of your admirable address before the London Historical Society touching our great and good friend Mr. Lincoln; and I doubly thank you for the truthful and attractive manner in which you presented his life and character in his lowly and higher walks.

Sometimes I feel that my life has been a mere delusion; that I could have personally known and been on terms of intimacy with one who fills so large a measure of space in the world's estimation appears impossible and unreal.

I became acquainted with the great commoner in 1832, in the second Blackhawk campaign. He was wrestling at the time with one Dow Thompson, the champion wrestler of Southern Illinois. Lincoln was Captain of a company from Menard County, and was champion of the Northern section. There was hardly any North at that time, in its present acceptation. They were both men of huge proportions and Herculean strength. Thompson was six feet high, Lincoln six feet four, and the bystanders concluded that Dow had the advantage in that respect, but Lincoln came out triumphant owing to his greater mental resources. He had more skill than his opponent.

I have talked with Mr. Lincoln about this incident after he became President, and it amused him exceedingly to

recall the scenes of his early life in the backwoods. He alluded very kindly to Dow Thompson, and had kept trace of him from St. Clair County, Illinois, to Arkansas. Dow was a true specimen of the genus Pioneer. His property was all absorbed in paying fines for fighting with the Germans, who began soon after the Blackhawk war to move into St. Clair County, and Dow had to emigrate, and, like most of his class, went to Arkansas where game was more abundant and he could fight in peace "without being troubled with the minions of the law." Dow had no malice in his composition. He seldom fought because he was mad, but just to find out who was the best man; but his curiosity on this head was intense and often gratified. He held Lincoln in high estimation because he was a funny fellow "and much of a man."

The next I saw of Lincoln was at Vandalia as a Representative in the Legislature from Sangamon County. He was one of the celebrated "long nine." By this time he had studied law, and was the acknowledged leader of the Whig party in the House, and was always put forth to squelch out some poor wight of a Democrat (who had made himself particularly obnoxious) by one of his inimitable stories.

Lincoln and I were born in the same year, of the same political faith and calling, and raised in the same backwoods fashion, and soon became intimate. I ever afterward followed his lead, and regarded him as a rough diamond of the purest water. But, with all my admiration for him, it never entered my head that he had those supreme qualities that are essential to enable a man to guide the ship of State safely through the storms, among the rocks, and over the quicksands of direful war.

Events have proven, however, that he had transcendent greatness stored away in the recesses of his nature, quali-

ties that would make him equal to the greatest emergencies. And now that his fame knows no bounds, that the loftiest intellects and those occupying the highest positions in the world bow in deference to his greatness and his virtues, I can hardly realize that it was my lot to have been on terms of personal intimacy with one of his almost superhuman endowments. I see him at one view the rough, awkward, good-natured backwoods boy, delighting his companions with his apt and amusing stories and illustrations. Next I see him in the forum convincing the court and entrancing the juries; then I behold him in the halls of legislation and on the hustings the peer (I may say the superior) of all his antagonists, but yet he was not beyond rivalry; others were his equals thus far, but his time had not yet come. Now without any adventitious aids he has worked himself into the Presidential chair. He takes the helm of the ship of State in the most turbulent and trying period in the world's history. Will he be equal to this supreme occasion? We doubt, we almost despair. Day by day, however, his powers unfold themselves, and he meets and overcomes every difficulty with transcendent ability. We are beginning to feel that in the ungainly Illinois lawyer we have the right man in the right place. We soon make up our minds that Providence has raised up Abraham Lincoln for this special occasion, and we trust with childlike confidence in his wisdom and patriotism. Now he begins to attract the attention and command the admiration of all mankind. A Colossus has risen in the West. Two millions of men have sprung to arms at his bidding. Is he to be a disturber, or has he come for the repose of the nations? Let us see. He crushes out the Rebellion. He strikes the shackles from the limbs of 4,000,000 slaves. He preaches good-will to all men, even those who had been striving to destroy this blest Government. He has demon-

strated that ours is not only the best, but the strongest Government in the world. At this juncture he is stricken by the hand of the assassin, while in the full blaze of his glory, when the whole earth was filled with his praises and deep regret at his death.

No impartial man has ever imputed to Abraham Lincoln an error of judgment or an unworthy intent. I claim my share of the credit of belonging to a race and a nation that is capable of producing so great and so good a man. I was proud to see that Englishmen could appreciate his abilities and his worth. None but the Anglo-Saxon blood could unite such greatness with such moderation. I delight in the admiration of England, and am vexed when she acts in a spirit of hostility toward us. I was for war with her on account of the Trent affair; but still I like her with all her faults. She has so many of the noblest of God's creation in her midst. Her John Bright, and her Goldwin Smith, and that sort of men prevented our swearing eternal hostility to our old mother.

I again thank you for giving our cousins a just and truthful view of our model man and President. Write at your earliest convenience. It always affords me pleasure to hear from you. I am your old friend,

J. GILLESPIE.

# STEPHEN ARNOLD DOUGLAS.

•By JAMES W. SHEAHAN, ESQ.

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A Paper read before the Chicago University, Bryan Hall, July 3, 1861.

At a meeting of the Trustees and Regents of the Chicago University, held June 5, 1861, with other proceedings, touching the death of the Hon. S. A. Douglas, it was ordered that at the annual commencement exercises on the 3d of July, there be an oration upon the illustrious Statesman, and President of the Board of Trustees. The Hon. Samuel H. Treat, Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, was appointed orator for the occasion. Subsequently, on the 30th June, Judge Treat informed the committee of his inability to be present. In the meantime, committees of the Common Council, and of the Douglas Club having been similarly disappointed in the persons chosen by them to deliver a like oration, proposed to Mr. Sheahan to deliver the address, and for that purpose united with the committee on the part of the University, and agreed to have but one address, to be delivered at the commencement exercises. Extracts from this address are given in this publication.

WHEN the traveler hears, in his old age and retirement, the name of some distant city, village, or land which had been familiar to him in his journeys, how his eyes will brighten, and the blood course more warmly through his heart, as that name recalls scenes of love, of peril, of pleasure, or of storm. And to you, gentlemen, who were his political friends, and you who served with him in the establishment and conduct of this University, and to us all of Chicago, and of Illinois, will not, until the latest days of our lives, the name of Stephen Arnold Douglas carry back memories to days when he stood a tower of strength in the national edifice, and we found happiness and honor in resting at his feet?

And now, what shall I say of him? What shall I say of him whose name and achievements are familiar to us all? Shall I say to you that he was intellectually great? That fact is recorded in enduring characters upon the history of his country—characters carved by himself mid the

storms of controversy, the heat of popular anger, the tumult of popular passion, as well as in the hours of national peace. Stephen A. Douglas was a man not only intellectually great, but gifted with a mind that was extraordinarily active. Trace him from the day, when having mastered his letters at his mother's knee, he was sent with his sister to the village school, down to the last moment before death stilled forever the massive, active brain, and you find that the mind of Douglas not only took in the present in its comprehensive grasp, but also and always, sought to penetrate that future, in which for the honor and glory of his country, he hoped and determined to bear an active and honorable part. He was rarely, if ever, merely quiescent. He rarely, if ever, gave a partial, cold or a careless support to any measure of public policy; he was either the firm and persevering and ardent advocate, or he was the firm and persevering and ardent opponent. His mind was so constituted, that even when surrounded by counsellors and friends urging him to a policy that would result in his own personal advancement, he could not govern his acts, control his speech, or regulate his movements by any thought of personal advantage; and hence it was that there was forever coming up from the lips of professional politicians the complaint that just as everything had been fixed, and every plan and preparation made for his elevation, Douglas would, by some speech, letter, or act blow their whole scheme to atoms, and dissipate all their hopes of ever reaching power and place through his statesmanship. If there be any present who ever participated in party struggles with him, they will, I am sure, verify the truth of what I have said. He was forever knocking over the paper houses and pasteboard castles which the professional politicians of his party were erecting for his benefit; and he did so because his mind was of that practical nature which rejected everything and all things that would not survive the severe test and crushing pressure of fixed and imperative principle.

He was remarkable for the almost instantaneous judgments he formed and expressed upon all propositions; he never wavered; he rarely doubted; and never changed his conviction. This peculiarity has been the subject of com-



plaint from friend, and has served to poison many a shaft from an adversary's bow. Political friends, whose notion of political navigation is to keep forever in smooth water, and never go out of sight of land, always considered Douglas an unsafe leader, because, instead of looking at new questions, with the view of taking such course as would avoid a storm, and keep the cargo of spoils safely stowed, he would promptly decide the matter upon its merits, and calling on all who dare defend the right, boldly launch out to meet the gale, and battle with its consequences.

And why, fellow-citizens, did Mr. Douglas act thus? I say that it was because he had the most unbounded confidence in the people. He believed, and the conviction had become part of his nature, that the popular heart was honest, that the popular mind was intelligent, and that time and reason would inevitably bring an honest and intelligent people to an appreciation of the right; and that a people thus led to appreciate and approve, would in the end prove far more reliable citizens, and a surer bulwark for the Union than a people cajoled by sophistry into a hasty endorsement of a policy, which, not having been examined and adopted by reason, might, at any moment of popular excitement be as hastily abandoned.

The great secret, or, the great means which enabled him to decide with such apparent rapidity and accuracy, upon all points of national politics, consisted in nothing more nor less than that he tried all such questions by certain principles. As parallel lines must be equally distant from each other at all points, and can not be parallel if otherwise, so if any measure, or policy, or doctrine deviated even to a hair's-breadth from the iron rule by which he marked the line of duty and of patriotism, then, to the extent of that deviation, be it great or small, that measure, or policy, or doctrine, in his judgment, was wrong. But do not let me be understood as saying that his judgments were after the Procrustean style. He did not say a thing should be so short or so long, so broad and so narrow; but he said the north star indicated the true pole, and that that compass that turned to the right or to the left, and pointed elsewhere than to the starry beacon, fixed from all time by

God's own unerring hand, was a false compass, and, together with the pilot who persisted in its use, ought to be thrown overboard, and sunk into the sea.

It has been popular at times, with the enemies of Mr. Douglas, to charge him with truckling to the slave interest. Never, never, was there greater injustice. I speak of this not to vindicate his party fidelity, nor his patriotism, but to vindicate from an ungenerous aspersion, his powerful intellect. He truckle to any one! He stoop, and be mean and sordid! It was impossible for him to do so. He despised and held in utter abhorrence that system of political bondage which held free-born men of intelligence as servitors at the stirrup of those who claim by prescription the privilege of riding rough-shod over all who thronged the high-road of life. He was a FREEMAN in the fullest sense of the term. He resisted the aggressive claims of slavery, and with equal power the aggressive aims of the abolitionists. He could not unite with either wholly, because he held both to be wrong. He stood manfully beside slavery when slavery claimed what the Constitution granted it; he stood as manfully with the abolitionists in resisting slavery when it demanded more than the Constitution granted. But he would stand by neither slavery nor abolitionism when they sought to go beyond the Constitution. Had slavery been content with what the Constitution granted it, it would have been an easy task to crush out abolitionism. Had abolitionism sought only to confine slavery by the limits of the Constitution, it would have been as easy to crush out the wild advocates of extra Constitutional privileges. Mr. Douglas labored to bring either of these adverse factions to a Constitutional theory and practice, and would have succeeded, had he not been betrayed, even in the hour of success, by men who were ready to sacrifice themselves and country for the wretched satisfaction of ruining him.

Mr. Douglas never, I say it confidently, yielded one iota of principle to slavery. His intellect forbade it. His whole political system was like a delicately constructed apparatus, in which the motive power, as well as mechanical agents, were principles so intimately connected and harmoniously arranged, that were he to withdraw a single

spring, or pivot, or wheel, or other part, no matter how minute, the whole fabric would fall to pieces, a total wreck and ruin. He took pride in being the architect of his own fame—a fame gained in spite of opposition, and those who knew him intimately know that there was always a greater probability of his seeking and provoking hostility than truckling or yielding to avoid it. He was brave; he was confident; he knew the power of his own great intellect; and it is unnatural to suppose that he would stoop when he might command.

Mr. Douglas was a Patriot, and his patriotism, his devotion to the flag, and honor and integrity of the Union, did not date their birth with the commencement of the present war. There have been other wars, and other occasions, when there was need of strong arms in the field, and stout hearts and eloquent words in council. Mr. Douglas, the moment this war commenced, promptly visited the President, tendering him all the aid he could render,—not seeking, like others, to be made a brigadier in a service of which he knew nothing—but tendering him for the support of the Constitution and the laws, a power in the nation which no one save himself could successfully wield. In this we have another instance of Mr. Douglas' promptness in decision. We all know how hostile a large body of our own people were to the war; we all know that had Stephen A. Douglas hesitated; had he played false to himself and his country; had he called on the disloyal and disaffected to resist the war, the campaign would have commenced not on the banks of the Potomac, but on the shores of Lake Michigan. In this case, as in all others, his conduct was governed by principle; that principle he had expressed in these bold and emphatic words: "Patriotism emanates from the heart; it fills the soul; inspires the whole man with a devotion to his country's cause; and speaks and acts in the same language. The Union wants no friends, acknowledges the fidelity of no citizen who, after war is declared, condemns the justice of her cause and sympathizes with her enemies. All such are traitors in their hearts, and it only remains for them to commit some overt act, for which they may be dealt with according to their deserts."

When were these memorable words uttered? Were they spoken when Sumter was sustaining the fiery cannonade? Were they uttered when hostile legions were investing Pickens? When traitorous Twiggs was giving up the country's arms and munitions to the traitors in Texas? Was it when preparations were maturing for the capture of the federal city? Not so, fellow-citizens! Stephen A. Douglas had not lived to the mature age of forty-eight to have his tongue touched for the first time with the fire of patriotism. He was a patriot in 1861, but he had been as patriotic before that period. The words I have quoted were uttered when the brave and gallant old veteran Taylor occupied the east bank of the Rio Grande, and a miserable faction in Congress were disputing, as another miserable faction is now disputing in Congress,\* over the point whether the President of the United States had not exceeded his constitutional authority in defending the soil and government from invasion. If the words I have read are just and patriotic to-day, and who will say they are not? they were as just and patriotic fifteen years ago; and being just and patriotic then, he did not hesitate to utter them *then*, but left to craven time-servers and sycophantic demagogues the privilege of waiting until 1861 to say it was treason to give aid or comfort, material or moral, to the enemies of their country's flag.

I have spoken of his confidence in the honesty and intelligence of the people. This was the grand foundation of all his plans and policies. He proposed nothing, suggested nothing, planned nothing that did not have as the foundation the honest will of the people. Take up all the schemes that he may have framed, examine them closely, notice the varied styles and purposes of the superstructures, and then you will find that each and all of them rest, or were intended to rest, upon the virtuous intelligence of his countrymen. He never, even in the darkest hours of popular hostility, never despaired of the people. He never complained of them, but the records of the country contain many an expression of his estimate of the demagogues who ride upon every storm, not caring into what folly or

\* This Oration was, by invitation, repeated July 18th, in Chicago, for the benefit of the "Douglas Fund."

confusion it may carry the country. His devotion to popular interests was tinged with no demagogism. He was oftener in conflict with the leaders and fomenters of popular violence and passion than at peace with them. He claimed to be one of the people; he laid no claim to distinction from ancestry; he preferred to be an honor to his name than to receive honor from it. He had known poverty and humiliation; he had known what it was to want for bread, and not to have the means to procure it. He had known and seen, when struggling in obscurity, the artifices and wickedness of those who abuse the confidence of the unsuspecting populace. His sympathies and feelings were all with the mass of his countrymen, and to their service did he devote his life. He never feared a political result, if the popular decision was postponed to a time which admitted of reaching them by argument and reason. He never was defeated by popular will. The election of last year was no criterion of Mr. Douglas' popular strength. Had there been any hope of his election; had the country not been divided by sectional strife and wicked purposes, there would have been a popular manifestation in his favor such as had never been made in the case of any other American statesman.

You have heard that in the conduct of military matters the fortunes of a disastrous conflict or campaign are sometimes reversed by the indomitable energy and bravery of a forlorn hope—that body of men who are sent out on a desperate enterprise, as a last resort, to overcome, by a bold adventure, the advantages of the enemy. You can well understand the feelings of the brave hearts engaged in this enterprise, as they march upon a mission that is to end in their death and in the defeat of their cause, or in rolling back the tide of defeat that has pursued them. Yet they have *hope*. The chances may be fearful, but nevertheless, there is hope, and history is filled with instances of the successful achievements of a forlorn hope. But in November last, what a spectacle was presented! One million five hundred thousand freemen, with an unflinching constancy, a devotion and a heroic fidelity to their cause, marched up to the polls and voted for Stephen A. Douglas! Their cause was in as desperate a strait as ever

was that of a defeated army; they knew they were marked men; they were conspicuously adorned for the shots of the enemy, yet they hesitated not, they faltered not, nor were they dismayed. They were forlorn, but they could not call themselves a forlorn hope, for they had no *hope*; all was lost, all was gone. An active enemy in front, a base and treacherous foe in the rear; nevertheless, with bayonets fixed, shoulder to shoulder, and with locked step, in solid column, and with rapid stride, they marched boldly to the last encounter! That was devotion to be proud of, and the noble leader, whose courage had led him personally into the very recesses of the enemy's camp, felt prouder of these million and half of unbought votes, given for him by men who knew he had not and would not have offices or rewards to bestow, than if he had been elected by the exertions of those who were confident of favors from him.

Since Clay, no American ever had such hosts of devoted personal friends, ever had such multitudes follow him because they loved him personally. In the consciousness of this popular affection, Mr. Douglas found ample compensation for his public labors. And it was his boast and his pride, that he had never, by precept or example, taught any of his countrymen to refuse to honor and to follow the flag of his country, or to resist, oppose, and defy the laws and Constitution of the Union. So strong was this honorable pride, so ever-present was the gratifying thought, that even in his dying hours, rousing temporarily from the delirium of fever, he gave that memorable message to his children: "TELL THEM TO LOVE AND OBEY THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES."

I have said Mr. Douglas was an American. His Americanism was of a peculiar nature. Long before he entered Congress, during the political controversies of 1841-'42, he laid down as a fact which he hoped to see demonstrated in recorded history, that North America was not too large for this American republic, that the American flag could cover but one nation, and that nation should extend from the extreme north to the lowest waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Twenty years ago, he declared in Congress that there was not room enough on this continent for another government—either republican or monarchical, and at the

hour of his death, this nation, with the government in the hands of men who had sneered at his doctrine, and styled his policy as demagogism, was about to try, by the ordeal of battle, whether the national ensign could be kept extended over our present existing limits, or a banner with a strange device, planted over half the republic. I can not do him greater justice than to quote his own clear and forcible language: "It therefore, becomes us to put this nation in a state of defence; and when we are told that this will lead to war, all I have to say is this: violate no treaty stipulations, nor any principle of the law of nations; preserve the national honor and integrity of the country; but, at the same time, assert our right to the last inch, and then, if war comes, let it come. We may regret the necessity which produced it, but when it does come, I would administer to our citizens Hannibal's oath of eternal enmity, and not terminate it until the question was settled forever." That was his language twenty years ago, and yet there are those who affect to believe that Stephen A. Douglas did not become a patriot until after he had lost all hope of Southern support. It is true that this was said respecting anticipated trouble with a foreign foe, but the language is perfectly applicable to a domestic enemy. He had more respect for, and could recognize and admit a degree of honor on the part of a foreign enemy, that he could not concede to a domestic one. His memorable words—that in civil war there can be no neutrals—we must be patriots or traitors—will serve to show his estimate of those who dare to violate the Constitution of the United States.

But that was not all he said. In almost prophetic language, he then described a case which is now before the country for decision. He declared that he would never consent that rival petty republics should grow up on our border, engendering jealousy of each other, and interfering with each other's domestic affairs, and continually endangering the peace of all. And the reason given for this was, that the establishment of a new republic on this continent would at once excite a jealousy toward our own, and as that new republic must naturally be the weaker, it would seek European alliances, and these alliances would,

of course, make this rival an instrument in the hands of British power, through which to assail our interests. An ocean-bound republic, with the whole continent under one flag, was the favorite project of his early statesmanship, and he lived just long enough to see the commencement of an attempt, by the very men who repudiated his policy, which, if successful, will see the Union split into as many governments as there are States, and each of them a prey to the avarice or intrigues of despotism abroad.

Time will not permit, nor is this altogether an appropriate occasion to dwell upon the many and varied national matters in which Mr. Douglas took an active part. For twenty years he was a leading man in the politics of the country. During that time he has borne a conspicuous part. His name has been blended with the legislative history of his country, and in all the branches of its progress. The debates of Congress are an imperishable monument to his industry, his sagacity, and his love of country. The great act of legislation upon which his opponents have assailed him most fiercely, and which, even after death, has been quoted as "the great mistake, not to say crime" of his life, was the one in which he took the most pride, and which he felt to be the wisest and the best. It was the Nebraska Act. A defence of that act is not needed here, but as it served for years as a battery from which he was assailed, it is but proper that in a few sentences it be stated why he proposed it, why he pressed it, and why it failed.

Mr. Douglas was one of those who saw that the agitation of the slavery question in Congress could accomplish nothing, save to widen the social and political breach that has always existed between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States. Seven years experience in Congress confirmed him in the opinion that it was necessary to remove that question from the halls of the national legislature. In 1850, the compromise bills of that year, of which he wrote every word, were passed. California had been acquired, and a road to the Pacific was indispensable. In 1854, the immense tract of territory, now known as Nebraska and Kansas, was closed, by law, to emigration and to travel. Like a huge block, it barred the natural pathway to the Pacific. The South was pressing a railroad



from Memphis, and south-westerly across the continent. Mr. Douglas wanted a fair chance to have that railroad lead from the north, where it could find communication through Chicago to the Atlantic. Our railroads had already reached the Mississippi, and others were projected, extending to the Missouri. He wanted Nebraska and Kansas opened, and the country made free to the enterprise of the north. In case of a dissolution of the Union, it was essential to have the Pacific connected by some other route than one through a hostile section. That was the motive for organizing these territories—a motive having its origin in the desire to benefit the whole nation, and especially to give to the northwest a fair opportunity to compete for the commerce of the great east.

But that curse of all things, the question of African slavery, lay at the threshold. He could not open Kansas and Nebraska without waking the sleeping Demon. He therefore determined to make one grand struggle, to seize the monster, to invite both North and South to unite in chaining it; and, having it in chains, to remove it forever beyond the limits of national legislation. For that purpose he framed the Nebraska Act, by which he asked the North and the South forever to bind themselves to leave the question of the existence or non-existence of slavery to the exclusive adjudication and determination of the people of the respective territories. The bill passed, and became a law. Its design and intent plainly stamped upon its face, and its friends all committed to abide its results. He had accomplished all his purposes, so far as they could be done by legislation. The rest he left to time and to the intelligence of the people; and throughout the eventful years that followed he was not an indifferent but a confident spectator, waiting for results which every day seemed more inevitably certain. For two years he fought rebellion in Kansas, and to Pierce he offered just what he offered to Lincoln—his aid in suppressing rebellion, and resistance to the laws and Constitution. In 1856, the Cincinnati convention met. He was but little troubled as to who should be the nominee, but he was greatly agitated lest some portion of the South would not ratify and approve the great act of 1854. But that convention, with-

out a dissenting voice, did ratify that act, and then from the very bottom of his heart he rejoiced. The chain which bound fanaticism forever had been riveted, and the territories were no longer to be divided by a black line, but freedom was as free to go to the lowest confines of the continent as it was to tread the ocean-washed shores of Oregon. Never, except by something approaching a miracle, would there be another slave-State formed by the free will of the people, and no State, except formed by the free will of the people, could ever be admitted without a violation of the contract. In the fullness of his joy, and in the tumult of his gratitude, he sent that dispatch which, while it withdrew his name, unfortunately made Mr. Buchanan President.

Despite the civil war and rebellion which had reigned in Kansas, the great measure worked its own way successfully toward the contemplated result; when lo, there came a blow so sudden and unexpected, that no human sagacity could have been prepared to meet it. The Lecompton fraud was taken to the executive bosom, nursed into life; a message was sent to Congress, requesting that, after the manner of royal infants in other lands, this only child of the bachelor President, should be portioned, pensioned, and provided for at the national charge. Had Mr. Buchanan been true to his trust, true to his plighted honor, and true to the solemn oath of office, the issue of disunion would have been tried on the Lecompton question, and rebellion would have been compelled to take up arms in defence of that horrid fraud—a fraud covered with blood, and reeking with the stench of the most shocking corruptions. Had he been true, Mr. Douglas' original design and expectations would have been verified, and the ultraists of the South, and not of the North, would have heaped contumely upon the Nebraska bill and its author.

As the corner-stone of this University was laid under an malediction upon the Nebraska bill and its living author, I have thought it not inappropriate, that in burying the illustrious dead beneath its monumental towers, a record of the motive should be placed where posterity may find that and the malediction together.

Mr. Douglas was an independent statesman. Looking

at all questions from an immovable stand-point of principle, he could neither be coaxed nor driven into an approval of what he deemed to be wrong. To you, fellow-citizens, in whose memory the eventful struggle of 1857-'58 is still fresh, it is unnecessary to enter into a detail of the wicked and desperate efforts to destroy him, put forth by the relentless old tyrant that fancied he was President, but who was a mere puppet in the hands of that junta that since then have openly avowed themselves traitors, even while in office, to the government of which they were sworn members. His offence was that he would not truckle to the South, would not support a fraud, would not overturn popular liberty, and would not falsify every act and speech of his life. Party rule and party lash were threatened; party rule and party lash were applied, but strong and powerful as were his fealty and obligations to his party, he acknowledged a higher fealty to the people, and a stronger obligation to his own conscience. He spurned executive smiles when those smiles were invitations to crime, and with giant arm, he struck to the dust the slaves who sought to bind him with chains of executive despotism. Standing almost alone in the Senate House, he met the storm, and sustained the shock unmoved, and never laid down his arms until the foul monster—LECOMPTON—lay dead and prostrate beneath his feet. That contest afforded a fairer exhibition of Mr. Douglas' varied talents than any that had preceded it. But it also conveyed to the heart of every honest man, the conviction that he was sincere. No man had ever been subjected to such an ordeal. Denounced and proscribed by the Democratic administration; excluded, as far as a mean and vengeful cabinet could do so, politically and socially; surrounded by thousands of politicians, from every part of the country, beseeching him not to sacrifice his party, by dividing it, and not to sacrifice his friends, by having them thrust from office; deserted by the entire Democratic press outside of his own State, and abandoned by all those public men upon whose support he had reason to rely; with a watchful enemy in front, anxious for him to trip, or overstep the line of principle, that they might precipitate his ruin, and elect one of their own men in his

place; with his house watched by detectives, to report who visited him, and with visitors coming under the guise of confidence and friendship, to hold conversations, which they purposed revealing to his injury; stricken even in the midst of these fearful circumstances, by a painful and disabling illness, it is not too much to say that the mental faculties must have been strong indeed to have passed through that protracted contest without once giving way to doubt or hesitancy. And when, so far as the Senate was concerned, the last vote was to be taken, how that mind, operating sympathetically upon his physical nature, enabled him to rise from a bed, where, for days, he had been racked with pain, and in that chamber deliver a speech which has never been surpassed.

His power of endurance, both physical and mental, were truly surprising, commencing as long ago as 1838, when he traversed in his campaign with Mr. Stuart, a region that now has nine congressional districts, down to 1840, and annually to 1852; and then the stormy campaigns of 1854, where opposite every hustings hung his own effigies; and again in 1856, when he traveled, up to the very hour of the election, pledging himself that Buchanan was a patriot and a man of truth. Hardly had he placed that individual in power, before he was called upon to vindicate himself from his agency in the fraud. And then followed the campaign (I use the term by which these affairs are popularly known) of 1858, with its excitements, its personalities, and you will pardon a soldier in that memorable contest, for saying—its brilliant results. That election Mr. Douglas never claimed as a personal victory; he did not regard it as a defeat of Mr. Lincoln, but he claimed it as a triumph of the PEOPLE, in a direct conflict with executive tyranny. In 1860, his physical and mental endurance was again fearfully tested. Commencing on the Potomac, I may say, he spoke day and night along the Atlantic coast, until he reached the shores of New England; his voice then sounded on his own native hills of Vermont, and the valley of the Connecticut echoed to its clarion notes. Passing westward through New York, he reached Lake Erie, and then by another route returned to the sea-coast. We hear of him awaking the yeomanry of Pennsylvania, and then

he is electrifying the Van Wiinkles of North Carolina and Virginia. He then turned to the west, and through Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, and his own loved Illinois, he spoke to the gallant hosts that everywhere greeted him, not in the despairing mood of one who knew that all was lost, but in the language of a patriot and brother, finding more consolation in a virtuous defeat than a victory bought with personal shame and national ruin. His words may be said to have been these: "We have stood thus long defending the altars of our country; if we must be overcome by numbers, let us fall side by side, and be buried with a constitution we can no longer successfully defend."

He was an Orator such as America has never known. His oratory was not exclusively adapted to any one, or any number of circumstances. Wherever he was, at the festive table, at the college exhibition, at a public reception, at a meeting of savans, at the village school, before the court, before a town meeting, in the Senate—everywhere, under all circumstances, he was equal to the occasion, and claimed and won the proud title of an Orator. His oratory was peculiar to himself. He was always natural. He never attempted the pedantic; he never sought to dazzle by fanciful imagery; he never employed any but the simplest language. The consequence was that gifted with a strong mind, a complete vocabulary of purest Saxon, and speaking always from an earnest conviction, he addressed himself to the minds of his hearers, and rarely ever failed to reach their hearts and enlist their sympathies.

No man owed more to his powers of oratory than Mr. Douglas, and no man every accomplished more by oratory than he did. In 1834, when he had not been in the State six months, he met, in debate, one of the ablest lawyers and distinguished speakers of that day. He was a beardless youth, unknown, small and delicately made. His opponent the political leader of his country, at home and among friends and neighbors who took pride in his success. That event is familiarly known. It was but a re-enactment of the story of David and Goliath, with this addition that the populace in their enthusiasm bestowed upon the victor the title of the vanquished, a term which followed him ever after.

But it was in the Senate that this great power was shown in all its force. That was the great arena of his glory. There he stood without a successful rival. In that theatre he bid defiance to all opponents, and in that theatre he gained his most unfading laurels.

It was my good fortune, while engaged in another business than that I now follow, to have been a witness of, and to have heard all, the debates in the Senate on the compromises of 1850, and on the celebrated Kansas and Nebraska Act. And what debates they were! As I recall them at this time, when the literature and conversation of the day is altogether of a military and warlike character, that Senate seems to me as one general battle-field, in which every possible engine of war is playing its noisy and destructive part. \* \* \* \*

But I leave the public servant, and ask your patience while I speak of the man. And after all, there can be no true greatness that has not an honorable heart to support and maintain it. His integrity was unquestionable and unquestioned. Never, even in the fiercest and most pitiless of all the many storms that broke upon him, was there ever a stain or an imputation upon his personal honor. Clay, with all his greatness, did not escape the calumny of corruption; Webster had enemies mean enough to charge him with bribery; but high as party and personal malice may reach after their victim, they spared the personal honor of Douglas. He went through nearly thirty years of public life, and no word of suspicion against his integrity was uttered. Until within a few years he had been poor; for twenty-five years he held office continually, and as legislator, judge, and senator, he had remained not only pure, but unsuspected. He never received from office more than enough to yield him an ordinary support for himself and family. Some years ago he invested a few hundred dollars in real estate. That investment grew in wealth, and extended until it became magnificent. His purchases were in and near Chicago, and if he became rich, it was because Chicago became rich. His wealth increased with the wealth of the City, and as that receded so did the value of his possessions. He could never amass wealth by the regular rules of trade. What he had was

held by him only as trustee for the multitude who called him friend. With hand ever open, with purse-strings never drawn, he dealt out with liberal hand to all who sought his aid. He prized riches only as a means of aiding others, and he gave freely and cordially while a dollar was left. His was no ostentatious liberality. Instead of crediting his own sagacity with the fortune that resulted from his investments, he recognized the disbursement of that fortune for noble purposes, as an additional obligation imposed upon him by Providence. Hence it was that the establishment of the Chicago University, when proposed to him, met, as you (President Burroughs) well know, a prompt and ready response. He saw in it a means by which he could serve the State, this City, and his fellow-men, for all time to come, and with him Action always followed conviction. The establishment of the University at once became an object, and with the endowment came the practical and the only condition, that the building should at once be commenced. He did not fancy that spirit which hoards through life great masses of wealth, to be administered for good purposes after the owner is gone. He preferred to do good at once, and in seeing others enjoy the benefits of his liberality, found infinitely more happiness than if it had been retained by himself. He took the utmost pride in this University, and those who have supposed his life to have been devoted to the attainment of the Presidency, should know, as his friends do know, that personally, he found as much pleasure in the anticipation of presiding as President of the Regents of this University, and in the active business of all public enterprises, as in presiding at the cabinet councils of the nation. I do not say that he did not aspire to the Presidency of the Republic; but I do say, and say it from personal knowledge, that were it not for the sake of friends, and to gratify their devotion of unlimited zeal, his political ambition would have sought no higher title than the Leader of the American Senate. He often contrasted the two positions of President and Senator, and took great personal pride in the fact that it had been demonstrated in his own case, that a President, through backed by all the powers of the nation, was not equal to a contest with a single Senator who did his duty to the people.

He is buried within sight of the halls of this University. At evening hour its shadows reach his tomb, covering it with the mellow light so appropriate to its solemn silence. As the pilgrim to his tomb shall stand at its side, musing on the memory of the dead, he will turn involuntarily to the west, and gazing upon the noble edifice, will exclaim—there stands the monument to the MAN which shall live forever; and which each year shall send forth to the country its graduates, all bearing upon their hearts the lesson of Douglas' great example.

Yet, this man with the free and bountiful hand, whose whole life was devoted to the service of the people, and upon whose private purse there was a never-ending demand, died poor. From the magnificent domain, which a few years ago he called his own, his family is debarred by the legal claims of others. In the broad State of Illinois, enriched by his labors, developed by his genius, and peopled through his enterprise, there was not ground enough that his children could call their own, in which to deposit his coffin.

The faithful widow, faithful even to the memory of the love which her husband bore to Illinois, at the solicitation of the people, gave up all that was left of him, and gave too her own little tract of land for his grave.

Let us hope that his life, devoted to the benefit of his race, may not have been spent in vain. His great heart throbbed and pulsated only for the public good, and let us hope that his countrymen now and hereafter may find in his patriotism, integrity, and life an example worthy of imitation.

He has gone from among us, but he lives in his fame. No more will this City resound with the fierce clamor of popular rage, or be filled with the pageantry of his triumphal processions. No more will his voice be heard on the stump, in the forum, or in the Senate, but the student of history, during all coming time, will search in vain for the record of brighter deeds, of a purer life, of a nobler heart, of an equal eloquence, or for evidences of those indomitable attributes of intellect and manhood, that belong to, and must forever attach to the name of Douglas!



*From the Chicago Tribune.*

## THE DOUGLAS MONUMENT.

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The monument erected by the State of Illinois over the remains of Stephen A. Douglas, at Douglas place, was completed Thursday, August 18, 1881, when the fourth and last entablature was put in position on the south side of the base. The erection of this memorial has been the work of twenty years, the first meeting in the interest of it having been held in the parlors of the Tremont House, Oct. 22, 1861. The call for this meeting was signed by the following-named gentlemen: J. W. Sheahan, S. W. Fuller, S. H. Kerfoot, W. C. Goudy, Thomas Drummond, David A. Gage, J. P. Clarkson, and Leonard W. Volk. A monument association was organized, committees were appointed, and the work of erecting an enduring monument over the grave of the deceased Senator was proceeded with.

The ground upon which the monument is erected was intended as the site of the Douglas homestead, and was purchased by the State from the widow for the sum of \$25,000. It is now neatly laid out with walks and flower beds, and is surrounded by stone copings and hedges. The corner-stone of the monument was laid Sept. 6, 1866, with appropriate ceremony, and many prominent public men participated, including Pres. Johnson and his Cabinet. In 1877, the late Joseph E. Smith, of this city, who was a member of the Legislature at the time, introduced a bill appropriating \$50,000 for the completion of the monument, and finally succeeded in getting it through. Two years later, after he had retired from the Legislature, it was found that \$9000 more was needed to complete the monument, and Mr. Smith went to Springfield of his own accord and secured another appropriation, making an eloquent speech in favor of the measure.

The monument, as completed, together with the grounds, cost about \$97,000. The State Commission for the completion of the monument have had a great deal of gratuitous work to do, as their predecessors of the original Association, especially the gentlemen of the Executive Committee, — Judge J. D. Caton, Potter Palmer, Lyman Trum-

bull, Robert T. Lincoln, and Melville W. Fuller. Judge Caton is Chairman and Melville W. Fuller is Secretary, and the burden of the work attaching to the completion of the monument has fallen upon the latter gentlemen. They all worked without remuneration, and deserve credit for getting the work done so cheaply and so well.

Following is a description of the monument as completed:

The octagonal base coping, of Lemont, Ill., limestone, is 70 feet in diameter. The first of the three circular bases of the substructure is 42 feet 2 inches in diameter, and the height of the three together is 4 feet 3 inches. The tomb is octagonally formed, 20 feet 3 inches in diameter, and 10 feet high, to the plinth-base of superstructure. Its chamber is 8 feet 9 inches square by 7 feet 2 inches high. The pedestal at each of the four corners of the tomb is 6 feet high, with base 4 feet 2 inches square. The octagonally-formed pedestal of the superstructure above the tomb is 18 feet 10 inches high, to the circular base of the column. Its plinth-base is 15 feet in diameter. The length of the column, including its base, which is 2 feet thick, is 46 feet 5 inches, and is 5 feet 2 inches in diameter at the base, with a diameter of 3 feet 6 inches at the top. The cap, including the ornamental frieze, is 4 feet 6 inches high, and the statue-base above is 2 feet high, making the entire height of the monument, including the statue, 95 feet 9 inches. The ornamentation cut in the granite consists of a wreath and the letter "D." on the lintel of the tomb-door. There are raised shields on the corners of the main base of the superstructure, the pedestal of which is ornamented with festoons and wreaths of laurel, and flambeaux on the octagonal corners, all in high bas-relief.

The two main sections of the column are marked by belts of raised stars, indicating the number of States; and the frieze of the cap is encircled with oak leaves in high relief. Within the tomb-chamber repose the remains of Senator Douglas in an iron casket, which is placed in a white marble sarcophagus, lined with lead. Surmounting its top is a life-size bust of Douglas in marble, made by Volk in 1857.

The following inscription is lettered on the front side:

## "STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS,

"Born April 23, 1813; died June 3, 1861.

"Tell my children to obey the laws and uphold the Constitution."

The marble of the sarcophagus is from his native State and county—Rutland, Vt. The tomb has a heavy, wrought-iron, grated door, with padlock, and an inner iron safe door with combination lock. The entire superstructure of the monument is made of solid blocks of granite except the die of the pedestal, which is in four parts, and has a small hollow space within containing the copper box of records, coins, etc., which was deposited in the corner-stone of the original limestone tomb. The faces of the raised shields, stars, and panels are polished or glossed.

The last of the statues of the monument, representing Eloquence, was safely placed May 13, 1880. All these statues, including the Douglas, were first modeled in clay by Leonard W. Volk, in Chicago, and approved by the Commissioners; then cast in plaster of paris, and in that material forwarded to the bronze foundry of M. J. Power, New York, who has cast them in the best bronze metal,—*i. e.*, ninety parts copper, eight parts tin, and two parts zinc.

The statue of Douglas, which is 9 feet 9 inches high, weighs about 2200 pounds. The four symbolical statues, if standing in upright posture, would be about 7 feet 6 inches high, and the average weight of each is about 1150 pounds.

The colossal statue of Douglas surmounting the top of the column, looking eastward over the lake, represents him standing in repose, with scroll in left hand pressed against the hip, and the right hand thrust under the lapel of his tightly-buttoned undercoat.

The four pedestals at the base are occupied by heroic-sized statues representing Illinois, History, Justice, and Eloquence, in sitting attitudes; the former has her right hand placed on the State coat-of-arms, with ears of corn in her left hand, and crowned with a chaplet of wheat, and is supposed to be in the act of relating the story of the State to History, on the opposite corner, who, with stylus in hand, is about to record it upon the scroll lying across her lap; her left foot rests upon a pile of tablets.

• Justice rests her right hand upon a sheathed sword, and holds the balances in her left. Eloquence points with her right hand toward the statue of Douglas, while the left rests upon a lyrical instrument.

All these statues are differently composed and robed in harmonious and classical garments.

The four bas-reliefs in the panels of the main base of superstructure represent the advance of civilization in America, first by an aboriginal Indian scene, on the east side, in which appears the sun rising above the horizon of a lake, upon which two Indians are about to embark in a canoe; wigwams, with sqaws and papoose, and an elder and two younger Indians, and a dog, the elder in the act of shooting a deer with bow and arrow.

The second, on the north side, represents pioneer settlers building log-cabin, plowing, sowing grain, and a group of mother, children, and dog resting before the unfinished cabin and the "prairie schooner" wagon.

In the third scene, on the west side, Commerce and Enterprise are represented by trackmen working on the railroad, a locomotive, vessels discharging and receiving merchandise, an elevator warehouse and telegraph line.

The fourth and last of the scenes, which was put in place yesterday, represents Legislation, by a group of statesmen, contemporaries of Douglas, in the interior of a public hall of Doric architecture. John C. Calhoun occupies the chair and Henry Clay is addressing the house. Grouped about listening to him are Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas H. Benton, William H. Seward, Gov. Cullom, and others to make up the group, among them the late Joseph E. Smith. Mr. Volk said he had not noticed until just before this relief was put in place that of the nine central figures three had been Whigs, three Republicans, and three Democrats.

The ground upon which the monument stands is bounded on the north by Woodland Park, with a frontage of 260 feet; on the east by the Illinois Central Railroad and Lake Michigan, with a frontage of 300 feet; on the south by Douglas avenue or Thirty-fifth street, with a frontage of 412 feet; and on the west by an alley, and the width of the lot along the alley is 266 feet.







